



Encountering God

ISAIAH 6

SERMON BASED SMALL GROUPS

Sunday, January 12th, 2025

Today's Lesson

Today's lesson is based on the sermon from Sunday, January 5th, 2025, by Pastor Tim Brigham. This message continues our series on the book of Isaiah.

PURPOSE

The purpose of today's lesson is to understand the impact and power of encountering God. Encountering God is not just attending small group or showing up for a worship service; encountering God is coming face to face with who God is and being transformed (changed) as a result.

MEMORY VERSE

Isaiah 6:8 "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."

POINT 1 – ENCOUNTERING GOD CHANGES OUR PERSPECTIVE – ISAIAH 6:1-4 – MONDAY DEVOTION

Background – King Uzziah and his son Jotham served as co-kings while Uzziah had leprosy, and now after 10 years, King Uzziah has died (roughly 740 B.C.).

The Jews during this time were very nationalistic, which was not God's design and plan; God desired for the Jews to serve Him and make Him known to the nations. In our current political climate, it can be all too easy for us to become tribal, nationalistic, or party-centric. God's desire for us is the same as it was for the Jews, not for us to espouse party or nationality, but to make Christ known and lead the lost to Him.

When we encounter God, He reveals two things to us:

1. His Character
2. Our Character flaws.

Isaiah received a vision of God, of the throne, of the seraphim, and the altar of God. The result of that vision was a change in Isaiah's perspective ("I am a man of unclean lips") resulting in a change in Isaiah's purpose ("Send me!").

How does your perspective need to change because you have encountered God and seen who He is?

POINT 2A – ENCOUNTERING GOD CHANGES OUR POSTURE – HUMILITY – ISAIAH 6:5-8 – TUESDAY DEVOTION

Isaiah ends up face down in the presence of Almighty God. How many times in scripture does someone fall on their face in front of an angel of the Lord? Here, Isaiah sees the Lord Himself. It causes an immediate change in posture, to a posture of humility.

When we come to small group, when we come to worship, when we walk through our lives on a daily basis, we're to live out this posture of humility. You may say, "but I'm not in the sanctuary," or "I'm not seeing a vision of God." Yet we know as believers that we are always in the presence of God, or more accurately, the presence of God is always in us – the Holy Spirit! Therefore, we must walk humbly.

When you are face down, you can't look down on anyone else. A posture of humility is not thinking less of ourselves, it's to think of ourselves less often. If we are honest, we are all full of ourselves, and if we are full of self, we can't be full of Him. This is why we must say, "I am a man of unclean lips," just as Isaiah did, die to ourselves daily, and be cleansed through the repentance of sin and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Humility naturally leads to surrender.

Ask yourself the question, "Am I humble?" The answer will be, "Am I surrendered?"

POINT 2B – ENCOUNTERING GOD CHANGES OUR POSTURE – SURRENDER – ISAIAH 6:5-8 – WEDNESDAY DEVOTION

Surrender is an admission that I cannot do anything; I am at the mercy of God to do a work in my life, and I'm open to God doing that work His way, in His time, on His terms. It must be an unconditional surrender.

Surrender may well lead to uncomfortable things; a difficult season, trials and tribulations, sharing your story with people with hardened hearts as Isaiah was about to be commissioned to do. Surrender is not based on an expectation that God will take care of all our problems and provide all our wants. That's conditional.

Surrender also doesn't mean asking God to show you His will and then deciding if you like it or if it is convenient. Unconditional surrender is putting your yes on the table and always leaving it there, no matter what God might ask of you.

Have you encountered God and has it led to your unconditional surrender? The answer to that question is, “Am I available?” Surrender leads to availability and obedience.

POINT 2C – ENCOUNTERING GOD CHANGES OUR POSTURE – AVAILABLE – ISAIAH 6:5-8 – THURSDAY DEVOTION

Isaiah didn’t suggest that God send others. He didn’t suggest an alternative plan. He didn’t share the obstacles or ask God to clarify. Isaiah responded out of humility and surrender with availability – “Here am I. Send me!”

Our obstacles and excuses often include:

1. Can I afford it?
2. Do I have the skills, talents, or abilities needed?
3. I’ve never done that before.
4. I’m shy, or I can’t talk to people.
5. That’s not comfortable in our culture.
6. What if they reject me?
7. What if it’s dangerous?

What obstacles or excuses would you add?

How do we overcome our excuses? Can we trust God to overcome our obstacles? What biblical examples can we refer to?

POINT 3 – ENCOUNTERING GOD CHANGES OUR PURPOSE – ISAIAH 6:9-13 – FRIDAY DEVOTION

Most biblical scholars agree that this is a recommissioning. Isaiah has already been called as a prophet of God, but now he is given a new and specific message along with the understanding of how the people of Israel will respond.

How many times have we sat in a small group class or sat in a worship service and said, “This is not relevant,” or “This is boring,” or “My lunch is burning?” What does that kind of thinking reveal about the attitude of our heart? Why is that we are not encountering God?

1. Have we prepared to meet God? Have we worshipped daily? Have we spent time in the Word and in prayer?

2. Have we been faithful to share our story? (We need to remember that being fruitful is being obedient – we don't produce fruit; God produces the fruit.)
3. Are we living in surrender and humility? Are we not surrendered because we're afraid of what God might ask or not interested in what God wants?
4. Have our hearts become hardened by our continual lack of humility, surrender, and obedience?

SATURDAY DEVOTION

Read Isaiah 6 again, review your notes, and take time to pray for your small group, your leaders, and the worship gathering.

Spend some time and write out who God is in Isaiah chapter 6. How have you seen God display these characteristics in your life? Use the 4R's method to pray through Isaiah 6: Reverence, Response, Requests, Ready (to obey).

In 2022, before Life Action came to Shiloh for the first time, we spent several Wednesday nights in prayer. During one of those, we looked at the covenant below. Have you encountered God in such a way that you could freely sign it?

COVENANT WITH GOD

I, _____ do hereby surrender and submit to the following covenant stipulations:

	<p><i>Details to be filled in by God.</i></p>	
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Signature _____

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERMON BASED SMALL GROUPS

1. Use the sermon notes you have taken along with this handout to discuss the sermon with your family in your home as part of your daily devotions.
 - We would love to hear about conversations you have in your home around the table with your family – how is the Bible impacting your daily lives?

2. Use these resources to help you apply the sermon in your daily life, at work, school, home, at Walmart and Waffle House, etc. Remember, sermons aren't events to be attended. The Word is not for information, it is for transformation. The sermon is meant to be obeyed.
 - Talk with your family about how to successfully apply the sermon in your daily life. Look for “teachable moments” when real life events happen and discuss how we should react and respond according to Scripture.
 - When you are successful at applying Scripture in a real-life situation, share it with one another.

3. Use these resources and your daily experiences with your small group the following week; discuss what God showed you through applying the sermon; discuss how you have grown, and areas you are struggling and want the small group to pray for you in and hold you accountable.
 - Be a confidant for your fellow class members. Don't' ever let a matter of prayer become a morsal of gossip. Be trustworthy and watch how God uses your integrity and faithfulness as a group to help you grow closer to Him and to one another.